

the best contributions to that has been the move from coal to natural gas when it comes to producing electricity—a significant reduction in emissions by that move alone.

Now, back home in Texas, we embrace an “all of the above” energy strategy that includes oil, gas, wind, solar, and nuclear. “All of the above” makes sense because you want a diversification of your supply—something we found out again or were reminded of when we had a big freeze I guess about a year and a half ago now which not only shut down our renewable sources—the wind turbines and solar panels—but also froze the gas pumps that compress natural gas and push it through the pipelines. So having a number of options allows you to be nimble and more flexible in the case of an emergency.

We produce more electricity from wind turbines than any other State in the Nation—even our friends in California, which may shock some people. On top of that, Texas-based companies are making serious strides in energy innovation, which I believe ultimately is the key to energy security and a cleaner environment and reduced emissions. Texas-based companies are finding ways to make our most prevalent and affordable energy sources cleaner.

I believe we could do more here in Congress to encourage that kind of innovation and diversification of our energy sources, but those efforts must come second to energy security, which should be job No. 1.

The fact of the matter is, renewables are not close to being capable of providing all of our electricity needs. In my State, it is about 20 percent. I think that is roughly the average around the country. But renewables account for less than 20 percent, I believe, across the board, of our electricity generation. We know the Sun doesn't always shine and the wind doesn't always blow, so you need a baseload when Mother Nature fails to deliver an adequate supply of energy. We need a reliable baseload, which means nuclear, oil and gas, and geothermal and hydro where you can get it.

If the President continues to wage war on American oil and gas companies, we will not have the capability to protect ourselves or our allies. Energy security is national security. If that fact was ever in doubt, Russia's actions have provided complete clarity. Our top priority must be to pursue our independence, and we do that by diversification and more production here at home. If we are able to bolster renewables, invest in carbon capture technologies, and take other steps along the way to reduce emissions, that is great, but priority No. 1 for the United States and our allies must be energy security.

The sooner the Biden administration views the oil and gas industry as friends rather than adversaries, the better off all of us will be.

We are blessed to live in a resource-rich country, and there is no reason to put the energy security of the United States and our allies at risk because President Biden is trying to placate a part of his political base.

The war in Ukraine is already highlighting the global energy security risk. We don't need to make that problem worse. We don't need to make it worse; we need to make it better. Now, I am not suggesting, either, that we embrace isolationist energy policies like the 1970s oil export ban, but we do need to take decisive action to reduce the world's reliance on authoritarian regimes. Just as the pandemic led us to reevaluate vulnerabilities in our supply chains for semiconductors and personal protective equipment, this war is also pushing us to reevaluate global energy security.

I hope this crisis—if there is anything good that comes out of it—will serve as a reset button for our energy security efforts and discourage those who want to increase our dependency as opposed to maintaining and developing our energy security by diversifying our energy sources and taking advantage of the natural resources that we have been blessed with in America.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I rise today to call for the rapid confirmation of Kenneth Wainstein to be Under Secretary for Intelligence and Analysis at the Department of Homeland Security.

The Under Secretary for Intelligence and Analysis, or I&A, sits at a critical juncture—between the analytic work of the intelligence community and the information-sharing role of the Department of Homeland Security.

The Under Secretary receives and analyzes intelligence and law enforcement information related to Homeland Security and ensures its prompt dissemination throughout the Department as well as to Federal, State, local, and Tribal departments that need this information to protect our Nation.

The nominee, who has been before our committee and passed out, comes with an incredible background for this position. Ken Wainstein served the United States throughout his career as a Federal prosecutor, at the highest levels of the FBI as general counsel and Chief of Staff to FBI Director Robert Mueller, as U.S. attorney for DC, and as the first-ever Assistant Attorney General of the Justice Department's National Security Division, and as Homeland Security Advisor to President George W. Bush.

The truth is, after a remarkable career, he went into the private sector, and the fact that he is willing to come back and serve this administration, although he was a career official on the other side, speaks to his character.

The role of heading DHS intelligence is not without challenges, which is why

we need this confirmed Under Secretary. The I&A mission continues to evolve and mature since its creation in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, and there is a clear tension between its dual missions: national intelligence and departmental priorities.

Some Members, including myself, were very unhappy with the I&A's operations in Portland in 2020, and then disappointed that the I&A provided next to no warning about what was to come on January 6, 2021. These episodes clearly reveal work needs to be done to improve DHS and I&A in particular.

At the same time, we all know the First Amendment protects Americans' right to free speech and nonviolent, peaceful protest, and a fundamental role of our government is to defend the Constitution, including these First Amendment rights.

As the confirmed head of DHS's intelligence operation, Mr. Wainstein will be charged with ensuring that DHS I&A keeps upholding those standards and protects civil rights, while also ensuring that I&A's work is completely apolitical.

To summarize, the role of the Under Secretary for Intelligence and Analysis is critical for the Department of Homeland Security and the country.

Consequently, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding rule XXII, the Senate consider the following nomination: Calendar No. 792, Kenneth L. Wainstein, of Virginia, to be Under Secretary for Intelligence and Analysis at the Department of Homeland Security; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table; and that any statements relating to the nomination be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Kentucky.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, we learned last week that the Department of Homeland Security has established a “Ministry of Truth.” They are calling it the Disinformation Governance Board—how Orwellian.

Now, the details are scarce of this effort, but one would assume that the DHS Intelligence and Analysis would be part of that effort.

The nominee being considered today was one of the architects of George W. Bush administrations's bulk metadata collection at the NSA—what a great recommendation for him. Sarcasm included—which gathered the private electronic communications of millions of Americans without warrant.

Is this someone we would want to be involved in the Biden administrations's new “Ministry of Truth”?

I will not provide my consent to expanding the surveillance state and the suppression of First and Fourth Amendment rights of Americans.

I oppose this nominee and object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I think we have an incredible nominee in Mr. Wainstein. He has served our government in the Justice Department at the FBI at virtually every level.

I think if my colleague, the Senator from Kentucky, is concerned about this, we ought to have somebody who is confirmed in this role.

And I would acknowledge that there are Members who share his concerns about First Amendment rights, including one of the members of our committee who has worked through Mr. Wainstein and was part of the group that unanimously voted to move him forward.

I am disappointed by the objection, and, unfortunately, both the security of our country and, candidly, the protection of those First Amendment rights is undermined by not having this nominee in place.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I ask consent to speak for up to 2 minutes on the nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NOMINATION OF ELIZABETH DE LEON BHARGAVA

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I urge my colleagues to join me in advancing the nomination of Elizabeth de Leon Bhargava to be Assistant Secretary for Administration of the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Ms. Bhargava would oversee offices responsible for recruitment and staffing, procurement, and providing administrative support for HUD employees. She will ensure the Department takes steps to retain the best talent and grow HUD's workforce to meet current and future needs.

Yesterday, I came to Washington on the commercial United flight with Secretary Fudge. She is working hard every day to serve her former constituents. I live in her old congressional district. And to serve this country, she needs qualified employees confirmed like Ms. Bhargava.

For more than 4 years, Ms. Bhargava served as New York State Deputy Secretary for Labor and Workforce, directly responsible for workforce policy and operations affecting more than 9 million New Yorkers. She recognizes that the program continuity depends on strong leadership at the top and meeting the Department's urgent staffing needs.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the nomination of Ms. Bhargava to HUD.

NOMINATION OF JOSHUA FROST

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, today, the Senate will vote on the nomination of Joshua Frost to be an Assistant Secretary of the Treasury for Financial Markets. While by most accounts Mr. Frost is qualified for this position, I will vote against his nomination out of growing concerns that the Treasury Department has been derelict in its responsibilities to the Senate Finance Committee and its members.

The most recent example of Treasury thumbing its nose at the committee is the unprecedented delay of Secretary Yellen in agreeing to testify before the committee on the President's budget. Typically, the Treasury Secretary agrees to testify before the Finance Committee the week that the President releases his budget. Since 2005, the only other time a Treasury Secretary testified before the committee more than 3 days after the release of the President's budget was Secretary Geithner in 2009, and he appeared just 6 days after the President released his budget.

This year, 37 days have passed since the President unveiled his budget, and Secretary Yellen has yet to agree on a date to come before the committee. Finance Committee members have been informed that the earliest Secretary Yellen will appear before the committee is sometime in June, more than 2 months after the release of the President's budget. The reason given for this unprecedented delay is that Secretary Yellen is too busy to fit the Finance Committee into her schedule. This excuse rings hollow when just last week she was able to find time in her busy schedule to give the keynote address at an event held at the liberal Brookings Institution.

So Secretary Yellen has time in her busy schedule to address the D.C. liberal intelligentsia at the Brookings Institution, but can't find time to answer the questions of elected Members of Congress and their constituents? This is unacceptable, and the Treasury Department must be held to account for shirking its responsibilities. In light of this, I intend to vote against the nomination of Mr. Frost to be an Assistant Secretary of the Treasury for Financial Markets.

VOTE ON FROST NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, all postcloture time is expired.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Frost nomination?

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET),

and the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SHELBY) and the Senator from Alabama (Mr. TUBERVILLE).

The result was announced—yeas 54, nays 42, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 144 Ex.]

YEAS—54

Baldwin	Hassan	Padilla
Blumenthal	Heinrich	Peters
Booker	Hickenlooper	Reed
Brown	Hirono	Rosen
Cantwell	Kaine	Rounds
Capito	Kelly	Sanders
Cardin	King	Schatz
Carper	Klobuchar	Schumer
Casey	Leahy	Sinema
Collins	Lujan	Smith
Coons	Manchin	Stabenow
Cortez Masto	Markey	Tester
Duckworth	Menendez	Van Hollen
Durbin	Merkley	Warner
Feinstein	Murkowski	Warnock
Gillibrand	Murphy	Warren
Graham	Murray	Whitehouse
Hagerty	Ossoff	Wyden

NAYS—42

Barrasso	Fischer	Paul
Blackburn	Grassley	Portman
Blunt	Hawley	Risch
Boozman	Hoeven	Romney
Braun	Hyde-Smith	Rubio
Burr	Inhofe	Sasse
Cassidy	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Cornyn	Kennedy	Scott (SC)
Cotton	Lankford	Sullivan
Cramer	Lee	Thune
Crapo	Lummis	Tillis
Cruz	Marshall	Toomey
Daines	McConnell	Wicker
Ernst	Moran	Young

NOT VOTING—4

Bennet	Shelby
Shaheen	Tuberville

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LUJÁN). Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's actions.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 674, Elizabeth de Leon Bhargava, of New York, to be an Assistant Secretary of Housing and Urban Development.

Charles E. Schumer, Jacky Rosen, Cory A. Booker, Elizabeth Warren, Benjamin L. Cardin, Patty Murray, Brian Schatz, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Margaret Wood Hassan, Alex Padilla, Amy Klobuchar, Tina Smith, Jeff Merkley, Jack Reed, Angus S. King, Jr., Tim Kaine, Chris Van Hollen.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination